

CONDEMNATION OF PRESIDENT WILSON
389

service you have rendered that I cannot help feeling regret that you fail to draw the conclusion that in my view is the only conclusion to be drawn. You first of all show how dreadfully Germany has behaved, how incumbent it is upon the civilized world that she should not be allowed to succeed, that action should be taken upon her. You then say with equal truth that you 'want no better photograph of any individual man than his opinion on this war.'

"But America as a whole could speak only through the Administration at Washington; and the real test, the real photograph, of any individual is whether he does or does not keep neutral about the action of the Administration in itself preserving a thoroughly base neutrality. You praise the New York *Times* for its stand. The New York *Times* has consistently supported Wilson and is supporting him now; and that makes all that it says on behalf of the Allies and against Germany mere beating of wind, a mere added discredit. When President Eliot denounces Germany and also upholds President Wilson and says that we must not prepare for war, President Eliot is occupying the worst position that can be occupied. To denounce Germany in words and not prepare to make our words good is merely to add to our offense.

"You say that it would have been an act of 'unprecedented folly' if we had not been politically neutral. On the contrary, in my view, the really unprecedented folly was in exercising our loose tongues in a way thoroughly to irritate

Germany and yet to do nothing whatever to
back up these
aforesaid tongues by governmental action. If
it was our
duty to remain neutral politically, it was
emphatically our
duty to remain morally neutral. Any political
neutrality
not based on moral reasons is no more and no
less admirable
able than the neutrality of Pontius Pilate or of
the back-
woodsman who saw his wife fighting the bear.
Either The
Hague Conventions meant something or they
did not mean
something. Either they can be construed
according to their
spirit, or by legalistic device the letter can be
twisted so as
to give a faint shadow of justification for
violating the